



2 decades later, 9/11 self-professed mastermind awaits trial



Eddie Bracken wears a cap with the word "freedom" while preparing for an interview at the Staten Island September 11th Memorial, in view of lower Manhattan, Friday Sept. 2, 2022, in New York. Associated Press

By LARRY NEUMEISTER, JENNIFER PELTZ and CARRIE ANTLINGER
Associated Press
NEW YORK (AP) —

Hours before dawn on March 1, 2003, the U.S. scored its most thrilling victory yet against the plotters of the Sept. 11 attacks — the capture of a disheveled Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, hauled away

by intelligence agents from a hideout in Rawalpindi, Pakistan. The global manhunt for al-Qaida's No. 3 leader had taken 18 months. But America's attempt to bring him to justice, in a legal sense, has taken much, much longer. Critics say it has become one of the war on terror's greatest failures.

As Sunday's 21st anniversary of the terror attacks approaches, Mohammed and four other men accused of 9/11-related crimes still sit in a U.S. detention center in Guantanamo Bay, their planned trials before a military tribunal endlessly postponed.

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Lack of funds an obstacle for completing projects in San Nicolas



Plenipotentiary minister of Aruba in the Netherlands present at bicentennial anniversary of Independence of Brazil



ENTERTAINMENT SCHEDULE			
MONDAY Angela Flores Violinist 6:30pm-8:30pm	TUESDAY Jean Paul Saxophonist 6:30pm-8:30pm	WEDNESDAY Eddie Kroon Singer 6:30pm-8:30pm	THURSDAY Marrybell Maduro Singer 6:30pm-8:30pm
FRIDAY Ricky Thomas Guitarist 7:00pm-9:00pm	SATURDAY Angela Flores Violinist 6:30pm-8:30pm	KARAOKE Happy Hour 9:00pm-11:00pm	SUNDAY Marrybell Maduro Singer 6:30pm-8:30pm

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2 decades later, 9/11 self-professed mastermind awaits trial

Continued from Front

The latest setback came last month when pretrial hearings scheduled for early fall were canceled. The delay was one more in a string of disappointments for relatives of the nearly 3,000 victims of the attack. They've long hoped that a trial would bring closure and perhaps resolve unanswered questions.

"Now, I'm not sure what's going to happen," said Gordon Haberman, whose 25-year-old daughter Andrea died after a hijacked plane crashed into the World Trade Center, a floor above her office.

He's traveled to Guantanamo four times from his home in West Bend, Wisconsin, to watch the legal proceedings in person, only to leave frustrated.

"It's important to me that America finally gets to the truth about what happened, how it was done," said Haberman. "I personally want to see this go to trial."

If convicted at trial, Mohammed could face the death penalty.

When asked about the case, James Connell, an attorney for one of Mohammed's co-defendants — one accused of transferring money to 9/11 attackers — confirmed reports both sides are still "attempting to reach a pre-trial agreement" that could still avoid a trial and result in lesser but still lengthy sentences.

David Kelley, a former U.S. attorney in New York who co-chaired the Justice Department's nationwide investigation into the attacks, called the delays and failure to prosecute "an awful tragedy for the families of the victims."

He called the effort to put Mohammed on trial before a military tribunal, rather than in the regular U.S. court system, "a tremendous failure" that was "as offensive to our Constitution as to our rule of law."

"It's a tremendous blemish on the country's history," he said.

The difficulty in holding a



Kathy Haberman places a flower and card in memory of her daughter Andrea Haberman on a gate with other memorial images surrounding ground zero, the site where the World Trade Center once stood in New York, Saturday, Sept. 10, 2005.

Associated Press

trial for Mohammed and other Guantanamo prisoners is partly rooted in what the U.S. did with him after his 2003 capture.

Mohammed and his co-defendants were initially held in secret prisons abroad. Hungry for information that might lead to the capture of other al-Qaida figures, CIA operatives subjected them to enhanced interrogation techniques that were tantamount to torture, human rights groups say. Mohammed was waterboarded — made to feel that he was drowning — 183 times.

A Senate investigation later concluded the interrogations didn't lead to any valuable intelligence. But it has sparked endless pretrial litigation over whether FBI reports on their statements can be used against them — a process not subject to speedy trial rules used in civilian courts.

The torture allegations led to concerns that the U.S. might have ruined its chance to put Mohammed on trial in a civilian court.

But in 2009, President Barack Obama's administration decided to try, announcing that Mohammed would be transferred to New York City and put on trial at a federal court in Manhattan.

"Failure is not an option," Obama said.

But New York City balked at the cost of security and the move never came. Eventually, it was announced Mohammed would face a military tribunal. And then over a dozen years passed. Kelley said talk of military tribunals two decades ago surprised many in the legal community who had been successfully prosecuting terrorism cases in the decade before. The concept of a tribunal, he said, "came out of the blue. Nobody knew it was coming." Then-Attorney General John Ashcroft was not in favor of tribunals and had been supportive of the Manhattan federal terrorism prosecutions, he said.

Now, Kelley said, with the passage of time it will be much more difficult to prosecute Mohammed in a tribunal, much less a courtroom. "Evidence goes stale, witness memories fail."

The passage of time hasn't dulled the memories of the victims' families or dampened their interest in witnessing justice.

Eddie Bracken's sister Lucy Fishman was killed at the trade center. The New Yorker opposed Obama's proposal to move the trial to federal court — Mohammed is charged with "a military act," and should be tried by the military, he reasoned. And while he

is somewhat frustrated by the delays, he understands them.

"The whole world is looking at us and saying, 'What are they doing after all this time?'" he said. But he realizes the case is "a process that the world is seeing, that needs to be done under a microscope. ... It's up to the United States to do their due diligence, make sure it's done right."

"The wheels of justice turn. They turn slowly, but they turn. And when the time comes, and it's said and done, the world will know what happened," he adds. While Mohammed has lingered at Guantanamo, the U.S. killed al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden in a 2011 raid and deputy-turned-successor Ayman al-Zawahri in a drone strike just this August.

Investigators with the military commission at Guantanamo Bay said he plotted the 9/11 attacks for three years. They cited a computer hard drive seized at his arrest which they said contained photographs of the 19 hijackers, three letters from bin Laden and information about some hijackers.

Mohammed, at his tribunal hearing, conceded in a written statement that he swore allegiance to Osama bin Laden, that he was on al-Qaida's council

and that he served as operational director for bin Laden for the organizing, planning, follow-up and execution of the Sept. 11 plot "from A to Z."

According to the statement, he also took credit for the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center; an attempt to down U.S. jetliners using bombs hidden in shoes; the bombing of a nightclub in Indonesia; and plans for a second wave of attacks after the 2001 attacks targeting landmarks like the Sears Tower in Chicago and Manhattan's Empire State Building.

He also claimed credit for other planned attacks, including assassination attempts against then-President Bill Clinton in 1994 or 1995 and an assassination plot against Pope John Paul II at about the same time, the statement said.

Mohammed's nearly two decades in legal limbo differs from the fate of his nephew, Ramzi Yousef, the mastermind of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing that killed six people, injured 1,000 others and left a crater in the parking garage beneath the twin towers.

Yousef is serving life in prison after being convicted at two separate civilian trials. He was also captured in Pakistan, in 1995, but was brought to the United States for trial.

At the time, Yousef said his right to kill people was comparable to the U.S. decision to drop a nuclear bomb in World War II. Mohammed has offered a similar justification, saying through an interpreter at a Guantanamo proceeding that killing people was the "language of any war."

Bracken traveled to Guantanamo in 2012 to watch one hearing for Mohammed and his co-defendants, and would probably go again if a trial ever happened.

"I don't know if I want to go there again to bring back all the hurt and pain. But if I'm allowed to go, then I guess I would go. Yeah. My sister would do that for me." □

Watchdog: Chemical safety agency impeded by staff shortage

By MATTHEW DALY

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The federal agency that investigates chemical accidents is hindered by a lack of staffing, leadership disputes and a backlog of investigations that threaten its ability to protect people and the environment, according to a new report by a federal watchdog.

The report by the Environmental Protection Agency's inspector general says the U.S. Chemical Safety Board is "challenged by vacancies in mission-critical positions and an inability to fully use the resources Congress allocated" to it.

Leadership disputes, shoddy internal reviews and reporting backlogs "are impeding the board's ability to accomplish its mission," Inspector General Sean O'Donnell said in a letter to the board's acting head.

O'Donnell's report, released this week, comes after the board's former chairwoman resigned this summer amid criticism about extravagant spending, ongoing disputes with other board members and a backlog of investigations. The board completed one investigation in 2020, three in 2021 and three so far this year, the report said. At least 17 investigations are currently waiting to be closed.

Katherine Lemos, the agency's former chair, left in July,



The entrance of the LyondellBasell facility in La Porte, Texas, is shown on July 27, 2021.

Associated Press

saying in a resignation letter that disputes with fellow board members "have eroded my confidence in our ability to focus" on the independent agency's mission. Lemos was appointed by former President Donald Trump and led the agency for two years. Her departure left the five-member panel with two Senate-confirmed members, both nominated by President Joe Biden. A third Biden nominee is pending before the Senate.

With a \$13 million annual budget, the board is the only federal agency charged with investigating the causes of chemical

accidents, including factory explosions, refinery fires and other industrial disasters. The agency had a dozen investigators as of last month, down from more than 20 investigators in the past decade, the inspector general said. Overall, the agency has 27 staffers out of 44 approved positions.

Trump proposed eliminating the safety board in each of his annual budgets, arguing that its focus on regulation had "frustrated both regulators and industry." Congress funded the agency throughout Trump's term, although staffing levels dwindled and Lemos

served as the board's sole member for nearly two years.

"The Chemical Safety Board barely survived the Trump war of attrition against it," said Jeff Ruch, a top official at Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility, a watchdog group of current and former public employees. The watchdog group had sharply criticized Lemos and repeatedly called for her ouster. The inspector general's report "underlines that it is difficult for a federal agency, especially a small agency, to function when it is saddled with leadership that is inimical to its mission," Ruch

said in an email.

The current leadership, including interim executive Steve Owens, appears intent to rebuild the agency, Ruch said, although problems remain. The board is "increasingly important because our industrial infrastructure, like our public infrastructure of roads and bridges, has been aging and is becoming more vulnerable to refinery explosions and other chemical disasters," he said.

The 17-page report by the inspector general recommends that the board quickly fill investigator and senior staff positions, ensure there are plans to hand off duties when staff members leave and update internal procedures on how reports are written and reviewed.

In a statement, Owens and board member Sylvia Johnson said the board "appreciates the inspector general's report, and we agree that there is much work to be done to get this agency back on track."

The agency is taking steps to hire more investigators and other mission-critical staff and has streamlined the review process for investigative reports, Owens and Johnson said.

"We look forward to an ongoing relationship with the inspector general as we tackle the many challenges facing the agency," they said. □

Judge tosses Trump's Russia probe suit against Clinton, FBI

By ERIC TUCKER

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A federal judge in Florida has dismissed Donald Trump's lawsuit against 2016 Democratic rival Hillary Clinton and former top FBI officials, rejecting the former president's claims that they and others acted in concert to concoct the Russia investigation that shadowed much of his administration. U.S. District Judge Donald Middlebrooks said in a sharply worded ruling on Thursday that Trump's lawsuit, filed in March,

contained "glaring structural deficiencies" and that many of the "characterizations of events are implausible." He dismissed the idea that Trump had sued to correct an actual legal harm, saying that "instead, he is seeking to flaunt a two-hundred-page political manifesto outlining his grievances against those that have opposed him, and this Court is not the appropriate forum."

The lawsuit had named as defendants Clinton and some of her top advisers, as well as former FBI Director

James Comey and other FBI officials involved in the investigation into whether Trump's 2016 presidential campaign had coordinated with Russia to sway the outcome of the election. Other defendants include the founders of a political research firm that hired a former British spy to investigate ties between Trump and Russia, and a well-connected Democratic lawyer who was recently acquitted on a charge of lying to the FBI during a 2016 meeting in which he presented the bureau with information



Former President Donald Trump speaks at a rally in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., Saturday, Sept. 3, 2022.

Associated Press

it wanted to investigate. But none of the claims, the judge wrote, supported Trump's claims of a conspiracy against him.

"What the Amended Com-

plaint lacks in substance and legal support it seeks to substitute with length, hyperbole, and the settling of scores and grievances," Middlebrooks wrote. □

2 House chairs seek probe into airlines' use of federal aid

By **DAVID KOENIG**
AP Airlines Writer

Two leading House Democrats are asking for a federal investigation into whether airlines used any of the \$54 billion they received in government pandemic relief to pay employees to quit.

The lawmakers said Friday that buyouts to employees made a pilot shortage worse and contributed to widespread flight delays and cancellations that have ruined travel plans for millions of people.

They asked the Treasury Department's inspector general to investigate and report back by Sept. 22 how airlines used the taxpayer money and whether any of it was spent on reducing staff.

After air travel plunged in early 2020, airlines offered incentives that encouraged thousands of workers to quit or take long-term leaves of absence. The airlines were caught understaffed when travel bounced back strongly this spring and summer.

The airlines have reduced



their schedules and stepped up hiring to compensate, but passengers are still enduring more cancellations and delays than normal.

So far this year, airlines have canceled 2.5% of U.S. flights, or about 154,000 flights — 30,000 more than if cancellations were occurring at the 2019 rate — according to data from tracking service FlightAware.

com. Rep. Carolyn Maloney, D-N.Y., chairwoman of the House Oversight Committee, and Rep. James Clyburn, D-S.C., chairman of a special panel on the government's response to the pandemic, requested the investigation.

"American taxpayers supported the airline industry during its darkest days at the start of the coronavi-

rus pandemic, when nearly 75% of commercial flights were grounded. Americans deserve transparency into how airlines have used the federal funds they have received," the lawmakers said in a letter to Richard Delmar, deputy inspector general of the Treasury Department, which oversaw the aid.

The number of airline passengers in the U.S. plunged

by 95% during part of April 2020, compared with a year earlier, according to government figures. The number of passengers has since nearly fully recovered to pre-pandemic levels, and the Labor Day weekend saw bigger crowds than in 2019.

Airlines for America, a trade group of the largest U.S. carriers, said federal funds went only to employee wages and benefits, as required by the March 2020 law that first authorized the payments, and covered only 77% of the airlines' payroll costs.

Without the federal money, the group said in a statement, "our aviation system would look like Europe, Canada or other areas that did not have any similar program. Or even worse, if not for the (aid), we may not be flying at all."

The Senate Commerce Committee held a hearing in December on the federal relief for airlines, with senators concluding that the program saved many jobs. □

Judge approves \$2.46 billion Boy Scouts reorganization plan



A close up of a Boy Scout uniform is photographed on Feb. 4, 2013, in Irving, Texas.

Associated Press

By **D. LAVOIE and R. CHASE**
Associated Press

A bankruptcy judge on Thursday approved a \$2.46 billion reorganization plan proposed by the Boy Scouts of America, which would allow it to keep operating while compensating tens of thousands of men who say they were sexually abused as children while involved in Scouting.

Though legal hurdles remain, the ruling by Judge Laurie Selber Silverstein in Delaware marked an important milestone for the BSA, which sought bankruptcy protection more than two years ago to stave off a flood of lawsuits alleging child sexual abuse by Scout leaders and volunteers. Lawyers for some of the victims said the

amount an individual survivor may receive from the bankruptcy plan depends on multiple factors relating to the alleged abuse. The plan calls for the BSA and its local councils, along with settling insurance companies and troop sponsoring organizations, including Catholic institutions and parishes, to contribute to a fund for survivors. In return, those groups would be shielded from future lawsuits over Scout-related abuse allegations.

More than 80,000 men have filed claims saying they were abused as children by troop leaders around the country.

"Credit to the courageous survivors that this breakthrough in child and scouting safety has been achieved," said attorney Jeff Anderson, whose firm represented more than 800 Boy Scout abuse survivors. Anderson said most of the

\$2.46 billion is to be paid to survivors, but some funds would be set aside in a trust to continue litigation against entities that have not settled, mainly insurance companies.

It will likely take months for any of the abuse claimants to receive compensation. Anderson said the settlement has drawn mixed reactions from his clients. Many are proud they stood up and demanded a cleanup of the Irving, Texas-based Boy Scouts, while others feel like they were dismissed because the organization "hid behind the statute of limitations" in some states.

The Boy Scouts of America said it is pleased the court has approved its reorganization plan.

"We continue to be enormously grateful to the survivor community, whose bravery, patience, and willingness to share their ex-

periences has been instrumental in the formation of this Plan," the organization said in a statement.

The Boy Scouts said the perspectives and priorities of the survivors "will be ingrained in the BSA's programming moving forward." The BSA also said that because certain parties have said they plan to appeal the order, the organization will next begin an appeal process in order to emerge from Chapter 11, "which will allow survivors to be equitably compensated and preserve the mission of Scouting for future generations."

A federal district judge must sign off on Silverstein's ruling. When it filed for bankruptcy, the BSA faced about 275 filed lawsuits and was aware of numerous other potential cases. More than 80,000 abuse claims were eventually filed as part of the bankruptcy. □

U.S., NATO note Ukraine army gains but see war dragging on

By **MATTHEW LEE** and **LORNE COOK**

Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — Ukraine's armed forces have made significant early gains in their counter-offensive against Russian troops in southern and eastern Ukraine but fighting appears set to drag on for months, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and the head of NATO said Friday.

Blinken, who was at NATO headquarters to brief the 29 U.S. allies after a trip to Kyiv on Thursday, said the six-month war in Ukraine is entering a critical period. He urged the conflict-torn country's Western backers to maintain their support through the winter.

"The initial signs are positive, and we see Ukraine making real, demonstrable progress in a deliberate way," Blinken said, referring to the Ukrainian military's recent push into Russian-occupied areas in southern Ukraine and the eastern Donbas region.

"But this is likely to go on for some significant period of time," he said. "There are a huge number of Russian forces that are in Ukraine,



U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, left, and NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg participate in a media conference at NATO headquarters in Brussels, Friday, Sept. 9, 2022.

Associated Press

and unfortunately, tragically, horrifically, President (Vladimir) Putin has demonstrated that he will throw a lot of people into this at huge cost to Russia."

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said the invasion launched by Putin in February is "entering a critical phase."

"Ukrainian forces have been able to stall Moscow's offensive in Donbas,

strike back behind Russian lines and retake territory," he said.

But Stoltenberg warned that allied unity will be tested in coming months, "with pressure on energy supplies and the soaring cost of living caused by Russia's war." He renewed calls for allies to supply special uniforms, generators, tents and equipment to help Ukraine's army

weather the winter. Blinken appeared moved by his visit to Ukraine as he railed against what he said were Russian war crimes and the price of "indiscriminate violence" inflicted on civilians. "I saw the costs in my visit to a children's hospital in Kyiv, where I met kids who will spend the rest of their lives without limbs, or with enduring brain injuries, or with other trauma that may

be invisible to the eye, because of atrocities committed by Russian forces," he said. The one-day visit was Blinken's second to Ukraine's capital since the war began, and his fifth into Ukraine since becoming secretary of state. On his last trip, in April, he traveled on the same overnight train with Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin but did not have the opportunity to see much of the damage in and around the city caused by Russian shelling. At the hospital, Blinken met with, among other children wounded in aerial and artillery attacks, a six-year old girl named Maryna who lost a leg after a rocket struck her house in the city of Kherson. He also toured the town of Irpin, much of it devastated by repeated Russian air strikes.

"You see just miles from downtown Kyiv these bombed-out buildings, civilian dwellings," he said after his return. "The only thing you can say when you see it is, at best – at best, these were indiscriminate attacks on civilian buildings, and at worst, intentional, deliberate, designed to terrorize the population." □

China shuns cooperation with UN rights office over report

GENEVA (AP) — China can't cooperate with the U.N. human rights office after it released a report criticizing Beijing's policies against Uyghurs and other ethnic groups in western Xinjiang, a top Chinese diplomat said Friday.

However, Chen Xu, China's ambassador to U.N. institutions in Geneva distinguished between not working with the human rights office and cooperating with the world body overall. Chen said the report issued last week – which said some rights violations under China's anti-terrorism policies could amount to crimes against humanity offered up "groundless blame" of China's policies and practices.

"We cannot, on the one hand, conduct coopera-

tion with the office, while at the same time it issued such a kind of assessment," Chen told U.N. Geneva press association ACANU. China believes the report

"constitutes a threat," and cannot "conduct cooperation as if nothing happened," he said.

In the waning minutes of her last day in office on

Aug. 31, the office of Michelle Bachelet, then U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, issued a report accusing China of serious human rights violations against Uyghurs and other mostly Muslim ethnic groups. It called on the world community to give "urgent attention" to the situation in Xinjiang.

Human rights groups have accused China of sweeping a million or more people from the minority groups into detention camps where many have said they were tortured, sexually assaulted, and forced to abandon their language and religion.

China has repeatedly said the "assessment" was a fabrication cooked up by Western nations.

Chen said China one of the

five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council will continue to work with the United Nations overall, calling the world body the "core" of international relations. "We will continue the cooperation. But as I said, the office cannot represent the United Nations by delivering such an assessment, in such a nature," he said. Chen also said China would take an "active part" in activities of the U.N.-backed Human Rights Council in its upcoming four-week session starting Monday. The council works closely with the U.N. human rights office, which falls under the office of U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. On Thursday, the U.N. General Assembly chose Austria's Volker Türk as Bachelet's successor. □



China's ambassador in Geneva, Chen Xu, makes a media statement criticising the U.S. for attacking China's candidate to head a United Nations agency that tracks intellectual property in the digital age, in Geneva, Switzerland, Wednesday Feb. 26, 2020.

Associated Press

Mexico's Senate votes to hand over National Guard to army

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Mexico's Senate passed a bill early Friday handing control of the country's recently created National Guard over to the military.

When the National Guard was created under a Constitutional reform in 2019, it was placed under civilian control. But most of its training and recruitment has been done from within the army.

President Andrés Manuel López Obrador says the guard must now be under military command, to prevent corruption. The lower house of Congress already approved the measure, and López Obrador is expected to sign it into law.

Opposition parties said late Thursday they will file court appeals, claiming the measure violates the Constitutional guarantee on civilian control.

"Public safety is not achieved by violating the rule of law, by violating the Constitution," said Sen. Claudia Anaya Mota, of the Institutional Revolutionary Party, who vowed that opposition would quickly file a court challenge.

For years, Mexican politicians had widely agreed the country needs to improve its often corrupt, un-



Demonstrators march on Reforma Avenue towards the senate to protest the president's proposal to move the nominally civilian National Guard under the operational and administrative control of the Defense Ministry, in Mexico City, Tuesday, Sept. 6, 2022.

derpaid and ill-trained civilian police forces, and stop relying on military forces to fight drug gang violence. Even López Obrador had, earlier in his career called for soldiers to return to the barracks. He later said he changed his mind.

In 2019, the president dissolved the old civilian Federal Police and promised the National Guard which unlike the United States, is completely federal and

never commanded by state governors would remain under the control of the civilian Public Safety Department.

But that created a bureaucratic headache for the armed forces, who supplied most of the National Guard officers from the ranks of the army and marines; those officers retained their place in the military, and were considered on-loan to the new force.

López Obrador no longer has enough votes in the Senate to change the constitution once again that would require a two-thirds majority and so his party simply changed the secondary laws governing the guard on a 71-51 vote.

Amnesty International said Friday's vote "will lead to more human rights violations."

"We have already seen the disastrous results of the mili-

tarization of public security forces in Mexico over the last 16 years," Edith Olivares Ferreto, director of Amnesty International Mexico, wrote in a statement, referring to rights violations and increased violence.

Of the more than 110,000 members of the National Guard, more than 80% came from the army and the navy. Nada Al-Nashif, the U.N. High Commissioner on Human Rights, wrote that "the reforms effectively leave Mexico without a civilian police force at the federal level, and further consolidate the already prominent role of the armed forces in security in Mexico."

López Obrador responded angrily to criticism of the move Friday, saying he was "surprised by the attitude of some conservative legislators, their level of hypocrisy and cretinism."

He brushed off criticism by outside groups, saying "the human rights and international organizations that kept silent like accomplices during the whole period of massacres and torture, and protection of organized crime, they never said anything and now they are so worried about militarization in Mexico." □

Associated Press

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Associated Press

Lack of funds an obstacle for completing projects in San Nicolas

ORANJESTAD – During a meeting in Parliament to discuss the Najaarsnota 2022 (Autumn note), prime minister Evelyn Wever-Croes gave information and answered questions regarding the developments in San Nicolas.

Lighting in San Nicolas

The situation with lack of lighting in San Nicolas is a problem that so far has not been easy to fix, the prime minister explained. It was possible to 'here and there' fix the existing problem, but right now the issue will be handed over to Utilities so that (electricity company) Elmar can take care of it. According to the prime minister, one of the challenges is the lack of funds to achieve a lasting solution, because currently the government has to reduce its operational costs. It is important for the community to realize that the reduction in operational costs means a reduction



in investment. Prime minister Wever-Croes explained that Elmar promised that they are finalizing the business model in order to take the problem over. Elmar will begin with the areas of Bernhardstraat and Mainstreet, installing light posts that they can work with themselves.

Hotel San Nicolas

Regarding the hotel Secrets Baby Beach Aruba, premier Wever-Croes explained that the developers had to stop the construction of the steel structure that was going because of a case in court. However, after the last verdict of the judge allowing them to continue, they could not just restart

again because of certain planning, and so they had to wait for another period. She understands that right now they are back to working on the steel structure once again in order to continue with the job. Regarding the hotel at ex-Esso Club, her colleague minister of Tourism, Dangui Oduber indicated that the

project is in the 'option' process, and during this, it must meet certain requirements. These developments are being closely followed to ensure it becomes a beautiful and successful project.

Carnaval Village

Another topic on which the prime minister received questions was Carnival Village. Regarding this, premier Wever-Croes asked for the plans that were made back when Carnival Village was designed in order to see what the intentions were, to share with Parliament and see where improvement can be made so that it serves its purpose. The intention is to build a wide podium on Carnival Village but this hasn't taken place yet because of lack of funds.

Prime minister Evelyn Wever-Croes finished saying that these projects, as well as all other ongoing projects in San Nicolas, have her attention. □

Prime minister and minister of Transport met with Aruba Aviation Department All-female team is on the island to carry out an assessment

ORANJESTAD – Yesterday morning, September 9, prime minister of Aruba, Evelyn Wever-Croes together with her colleague minister of Transport, Integrity, Nature and Older Persons Affairs, Ursell Arends, held a meeting with Aruba Aviation Department (Directie Luchtvaart Aruba, DLA). Director of Civil Aviation Aruba, Mr. Edwin Kelly was present during the meeting.

These days, Aruba together with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) are going over all aviation

systems in Aruba in order to get an understanding on how well Aruba is prepared for an audit in the Future. It is a great honor for Aruba that the team that came over for the assessment in Aruba is a team of experts in the field of aviation, and is an all-female team from Curaçao, Honduras and Mexico.

"This morning I had the honor of meeting this team of ladies and to talk with them. They explained to us how the assessment is going and they informed us



that they are very proud of everything that Aruba has in place. Of course there are things that need to be improved in order to guarantee aviation safety even more, but they are happy and satisfied with what they're seeing right now", the prime minister commented.

that the Government of Aruba, not only in the name of minister Ursell Arends who is in charge of Transport, but also the entire Council of Ministers, gave the commitment that they will support Aruba Aviation Department in this evaluation in order to guarantee safety in aviation.

of Aruba Aviation Department also, which has many female professionals, for all the work that they are doing. It was nice to speak with this group of professionals who are breaking barriers. Women who are breaking barriers in every sector and position in order to create a better world", prime minister Evelyn Wever-Croes expressed. □

Wever-Croes expressed "I thank the amazing team



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How it all began

It was 1938 when Mr. Eric Ponson started his journey at General Store. Ponson did not hesitate and decided to buy General Store. Buying a store and thus going from employee to owner of a business with a debt of 11.000 guilders was not an easy task.

As the saying goes: "Behind every successful man, is a strong woman". In the case of Ponson, this was no different. As General Store progressed and slowly became successful, Mrs. Irene Ponson, came in to assist her husband. Irene Ponson is a visionary, she knew exactly where and how to invest and within a short amount of time in 1970, General Store moved to a better location at the Steenweg. This allowed for a lot more merchandise, products and employees. Supply and de-

mand was as such, that General Store became the number 1 electrical business. Business kept going so well that the location at the Steenweg became too small and was moved later to Dakota Shopping Paradise and later to Pedro Gallego Straat. With this move, an expansion was decided upon and an electronics store in Savaneta was opened. General Store still being very successful was ready for more growth.

Ricky, Kenneth, Corine and Frans are the fruits of this marriage. Kenneth and Frans however, decided to further develop their father's legacy and continued with their mother's dream to expand the business. An expansion not in square feet only, but in merchandise as well. A great opportunity presented itself when the Ponson family was able to buy a piece of property across from the airport. In 2007 the Ponson family moved into their brand new and huge building. Ponson's General Store now had an electrical department, a housewares department, a paint department and a hardware department.



After a successful opening and expansion, Kenneth and Frans who inherited their mothers vision, decided that General Store was ready for yet another expansion. With the support of Mr. Tom Barfell and management of Do it Best in the States, the construction of Do it Center commenced.

Fast forward to today. A Do it Center in Aruba, with more than 50.000 top of the line items for interior as well exterior use, building materials, STO products and a top of the line grocery store. Perseverance, responsibility, vision and the courage to invest have made Ponson's General Store as successful as it is today.

Super Do It Center Shaba & Groceries

Located in Shaba, Noord. This is the last sibling of the Do It Center family. Here you will be able to find anything you are looking for. The building is divided into several departments from home to hardware to groceries. Everything under one roof. Groceries? Visit the fully stocked supermarket with fresh fruits and vegetables and high class meat selections. Highly known prod-

ucts and brands are here for you to grab. Every week Do It Center Groceries offers its weekly special on selected items. Weekly specials are very popular and a perfect chance for you to buy your favorite products at a reduced price.

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Do it Center Shaba is open from Monday to Saturday from 8AM to 8PM and on Sunday's from 9AM to 6PM.

For more information go to www.doit.aw.



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Army unit exercises with Caribbean Military (CARMIL) on Aruba

During the period of 12 up to and including September 22nd, the 40th. Rotation of the Company in the West (CidW), the army unit which is temporarily placed on a rotation basis with the Dutch Naval Forces in the Caribbean region, will be training together with Caribbean Military (CARMIL) on Aruba.

During these exercises different movements will take place on the island. This is both on foot and with (army) vehicles. Their base of operations will be the Marine barracks at Savaneta and they will be mostly seen on the East-side of the island.

The aim of this training is to get to know the country with its geography and population better, but also to practice one's own tactics and techniques under aggravated climatic conditions. The facilities of the marine barracks and extensive nature reserves of Aruba lend themselves particularly well to this. Parts of



this exercise include reconnaissance exercises (covertly mapping or monitoring an area or object), further developing one's own specialist skills and improving general fitness. Since the Caribbean military personnel simultaneously carry out a training program, there will also be cooperation and knowledge exchange. This improves the bond between both units active in the Caribbean.

The CidW is an army company, stationed in Curaçao, which is alternated every four months by a next unit. CidW-40 comes from the Operational Support Command Land, one of the four brigades of the Royal Netherlands Army. This company has been reinforced with, amongst others, members of the construction engineering and the medical service. In this way, the company has a great diversity of specialties in the Caribbean region. The unit is also used to provide emergency aid or after a request for assistance from the local Government. The unit is brought in by the support vessel Zr. Ms. Pelikaan. They return by air transport, as the ship will then be deployed elsewhere because of the hurricane exercise 'Windward Express' on the Windward Islands. □



Exhibition The Lens Of My Eyes organized by Leo Vrolijk

Oranjestad - On Press Day, the National Library of Aruba opened the exhibition The Lens Of My Eyes, organized yearly by photographer and cameraman Anselmo Leo Vrolijk and his team.



The exhibit consists of a selection of photographs captured last year through the eyes of 15 press photographers.

It is for the 15th year that Mr. Vrolijk organizes this exhibition. This year it was dedicated to Mr. Rudolph Haseh and Mr. Jason Inesia.

The Rookie of the Year, Mr. Andrew Vrolijk, received the Djiespie's Award.

The library invites the com-

munity to visit this exhibit at the National Library in Oranjestad, which includes 150 photographs. This collection is on display for the entire month of September.

The Minister of Culture Xiomara Maduro congratulates Mr. Leo Vrolijk and his team for the beautiful exhibition and those who contributed and cooperated to make it a reality. □



The Tax Department registered 3.129 new taxpayers in the first half of 2022

ORANJESTAD – The Tax Department (DIMP) is a government department with the task of guaranteeing tax revenues and facilitating taxpayers in meeting tax obligations.

It is a task with enormous responsibility, not only for

the budget of the country of Aruba but also for other government entities such as ATA, TPEF, AZV, SVB, DIMAS and DIP.

Before levying any tax, it is imperative to identify and register individuals and/ or companies that generate

income for which they are subject to tax. It is a routine job of the tax authorities. In the first half of 2022, the DIMP registered 3,129 new taxpayers.

Registration department

The DIMP has its Registration Department in charge of the registration of private individuals and companies. This department must continuously optimize its register to keep it up-to-date.

This registration process

may seem simple but is more complex as it requires strict control of the information received. The department checks the documents and proof of identity before being able to register the data in its digital system. The DIMP must work closely with the Civil Registry Office (Censo), Chamber of Commerce, DOW, DIP, Land Registry and Mapping Agency, DIMAS, SVB, and ATA to verify the data. These figures indicate what efforts the DIMP must

continuously make in the compliance concerning the various types of taxes.

The DIMP receives a lot of information for new registrations daily. They often receive it from individuals or companies but also other sources. The DIMP may receive anonymous information about individuals or companies that clandestinely receive income that is not subject to tax. An investigation will start with the help of, for example, the FIOT, to eventually register those who do not comply with their tax liability.

Once the person or company is registered, it has the responsibility to meet the tax obligations and must file tax returns and make the corresponding payments on time. This way, they contribute to the land treasury and the well-being of the country of Aruba. □

Tax	New Taxpayers (January -June 2022)
BBO - Tax on business turnover	490
BBV - Special tax on stays	66
EP - Ground lease	227
GB - Land tax	1.208
IB - Income tax	464
LB - Wage tax	327
TH - Tourist tax	66
WB - Profit tax	281
Total	3.129



Plenipotentiary minister of Aruba in the Netherlands present at bicentennial anniversary of Independence of Brazil



DEN HAAG – Alternate Plenipotentiary minister of Aruba in the Netherlands, Mr. Ady Thijsen was present at a reception celebrating

the bicentennial anniversary of Independence of the Republic of Brazil.

Mr. Thijsen, in the name of

the Government of Aruba congratulated the Brazilian ambassador for the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Paulo Roberto Caminha



de Castilhos França on this special occasion.

The minister also emphasized on this occasion the

bonds between Brazil and Aruba, among others, on the field of culture and tourism.

The reception provided minister Thijsen with a great opportunity to meet and chat with other ambassadors, like Suriname ambassador, Rajendre Khargi, Uruguayan ambassador, Alvaro Enrique Gonzalez Otero, and Bolivia ambassador, Roberto Calzadilla Sarmiento.

Images are courtesy of Arubahuis.



Minister of Nature met with animal farmers

ORANJESTAD – Aruban minister of Nature, Transport, Integrity and Older Persons Affairs, Mr. Ursell Arends last Wednesday met with various animal farmers on Aruba.

During this encounter, the farmers expressed their worries, discussing various topics like dogs on the streets that attack their livestock, problems with theft of livestock like goats, and how to make registration at DLVV (Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries and

Market Halls Directorate) easier and more accessible.

"We are very happy to be able to sit down today with animal farmers in Aruba", minister Arends started saying. "We thank them also for organizing themselves in order to bring forward their worries, which give us an insight on the problems that they are facing, and also to see where we can give our cooperation. As a ministry, we are sure that we will be do our utmost effort

to come with concrete solutions for this sector, which contributes to food security in Aruba."

An agreement was made to continue meeting with the group, and to deal with their worries in coordination with DLVV (Santa Rosa) in order to introduce structural solutions.

The ministry of Nature commends every farmer who contributes to the primary sector of Aruba, and our entire community, and for



this reason is willing to give the cooperation of the ministry wherever it is pos-

sible, according to a press release. □

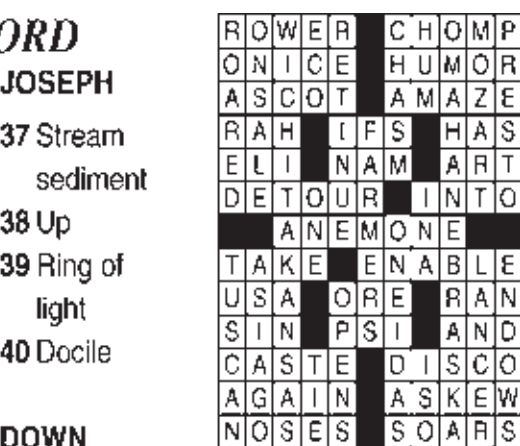
CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

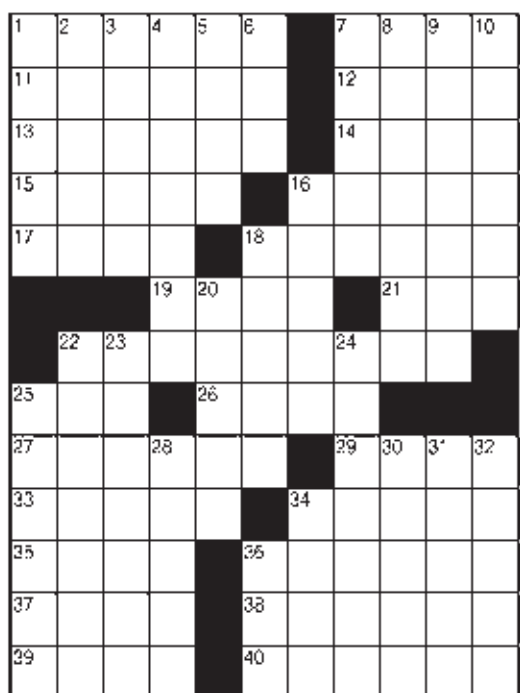
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Yesterday's answer



9-10

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

9-10

CRYPTOQUOTE

R P K F D E I K B B K N J F Z X T I
A J J A E X D U K X Z X A Y I L K U
P L P K U X T K B X K N I N A E I
K U X I F F K L I U X F Z — T I U E Z
R A E G

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: IT TAKES COURAGE TO GROW UP AND BECOME WHO YOU REALLY ARE. — E.E. CUMMINGS

Retailers pull lobster from menus after 'red list' warning

By PATRICK WHITTLE

Associated Press

PORTLAND, Maine (AP) —

Some retailers are taking lobster off the menu after an assessment from an influential conservation group that the harvest of the seafood poses too much of a risk to rare whales and should be avoided.

Whales can suffer injuries and fatalities when they become entangled in the gear that connects to lobster traps on the ocean floor. Seafood Watch, which rates the sustainability of different seafoods, said this week it has added the American and Canadian lobster fisheries to its "red list" of species to avoid. The organization, based at Monterey Bay Aquarium in California, said in a report that the fishing industry is a danger to North Atlantic right whales because "current management measures do not go far enough to mitigate entanglement risks and promote recovery of the species." Thousands of businesses use Seafood Watch's recommendations



A sternman on a lobster fishing boat drinks his coffee while heading out to sea before dawn, Thursday, Sept. 8, 2022, off of Kennebunkport, Maine.

Associated Press

to inform seafood buying decisions, and many have pledged to avoid any items that appear on the red list. A spokesperson for Blue Apron, the New York meal kit retailer, said the company stopped offering a seasonal lobster box prior to the report, and all of the seafood it is currently using follows Seafood Watch's guidelines. HelloFresh, the Germany-based meal kit company that is the largest such company operating in the U.S., also pledged

shortly after the announcement to stop selling lobster. "HelloFresh is committed to responsible sourcing and follows guidelines from the Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch program," said Saskia Leisewitz, a spokesperson for HelloFresh.

Seafood Watch assigns ratings of "best choice," "good alternative" and "avoid" to more than 2,000 seafood items based on how sustainably they are managed. □

Jeep unveils its 1st electric SUVs for North America, Europe

DETROIT (AP) — Jeep will start selling two fully electric SUVs in North America and another one in Europe over the next two years.

The new EVs, Jeep's first, are part of the Stellantis brand's plans to convert half of its U.S. sales and

all of its European sales to battery-electric vehicles by 2030. They're the first for the brand, and executives are promising that they'll be fully capable of off-road travel. The new vehicles include the Jeep Recon, a four-wheel-drive

midsize SUV about the size of the Jeep Wrangler and rival Ford's gas-powered Bronco Sport. It will be produced at an undisclosed North American factory starting in 2024. No range, performance figures or prices were released.

Jeep also will start making an all-electric Wagoneer S midsize luxury SUV in 2024 that also can go off road. The electric extension of the Wagoneer sub-brand is expected to go 400 miles (650 kilometers) on a single charge, have 600 horsepower, and be able to travel from zero to 60 miles per hour (100 kilometers per hour) in about 3.5 seconds. The Wagoneer S also will be built in North America at a yet-to-be disclosed factory. No prices were released on this SUV either. □



This photo provided by Stellantis shows the new, all-electric Jeep Recon.

Associated Press

Summer of '22 brought record heat, solar power to Europe

By FRANK JORDANS
Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — Europe smashed previous temperature records this summer, with long periods of sunshine causing sweltering conditions and droughts across much of the continent but also helping boost much-needed solar power, according to data published Thursday.

The European Commission said average temperatures from June to August were 0.4 degrees Celsius (0.7 degrees Fahrenheit) higher on the continent this year than the previous record set in 2021. In August alone, the previous monthly record from 2018 was exceeded by 0.8 C (1.4 F) this year, it said.

"European temperatures were most above average in the east of the continent in August, but were still well above average in the southwest, where they had been high also in June and July," the commission said, citing data gathered by its Copernicus climate program, which has used satellites to monitor surface air temperatures since 1991. Separately, energy think tank Ember said the European Union set a new record for solar power this summer, reducing the need for natural gas imports.

The group said the 27-nation bloc generated 12% of its electricity from solar power from May to August, up from 9% during the same period last year.

Solar energy narrowly topped the share provided from wind or hydropower, while coming in just below that produced from burning coal.

Ember said that without the 99.4 terrawatt hours of electricity provided by solar, the EU would have had to buy 20 billion cubic meters of gas, costing about 29 billion euros (nearly \$29 billion) during the four-month period.

The Netherlands and Germany, not known for their sunny climates, had the highest share of electric-



Solar panels on Germany's biggest floating photovoltaic plant produce energy under a blue sky on a lake in Haltern, Germany, Tuesday, May 3, 2022.

Associated Press

ity from solar, followed by Spain. Poland saw the biggest increase in solar power generation compared with 2018, increasing installed capacity 26-fold, the report said.

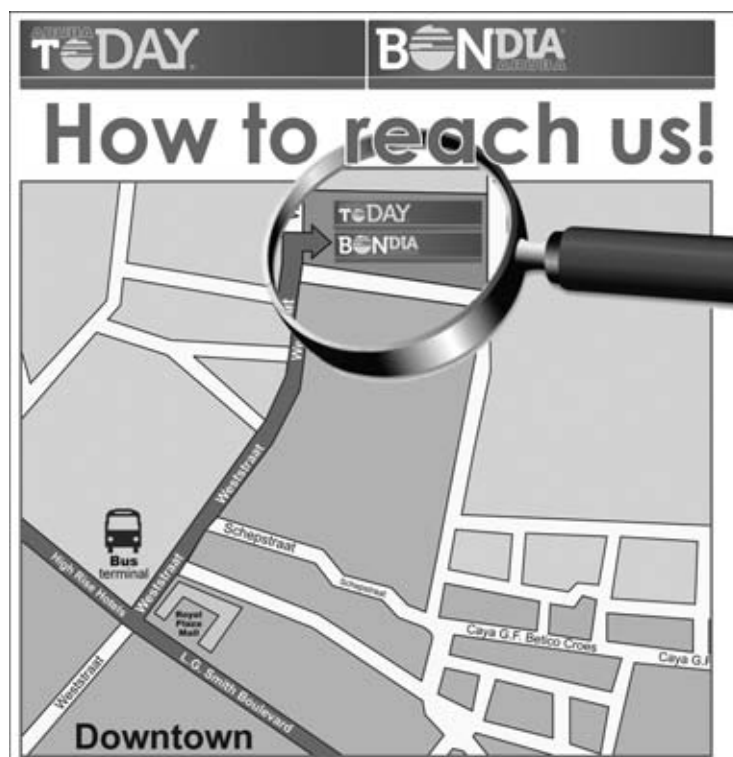
"The solar records set this summer helped keep the lights on and reduced the EU's now critical gas consumption, providing short-term relief to the soaring cost of energy," its authors said.

With Europe trying to wean itself off Russian gas be-

cause of the war in Ukraine, and high fossil fuel prices expected to last for years, they urged governments to ensure that solar power use can expand further, including by removing regulatory hurdles.

The authors noted this would also help the EU achieve its climate goal, saying solar power — which provides much less electricity in the winter months — would need to increase up to nine-fold by 2035 for the bloc to meet the emis-

sions targets set in the 2015 Paris accord. □



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MLB adopts pitch clock, shift limits, bigger bases for 2023

By RONALD BLUM
AP Baseball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Major League Baseball adopted its first pitch clock, limits on defensive shifts and larger bases for next season in an effort to shorten games and increase offense in a tradition-bound sport.

The decision on the clock and shift restrictions by the sport's 11-man competition committee was made Friday over the unanimous opposition of the panel's players, who approved the larger bases. The changes had long been pushed by baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred in an effort to combat the increase in dead time over four decades and suffocation of offense in the age of analytics. "Throughout the extensive testing of recent years, minor league personnel and a wide range of fans from the most loyal to casual observers have recognized the collective impact of these changes in making the game even better and more enjoyable," Manfred said in a statement. Until last winter, MLB needed one year advance notice to make on-field rules changes without approval of the players' association. The union agreed in the March lockout settlement to establish the committee, which includes six management representatives, four players and one umpire. "Players live the



A pitch clock is deployed to restrict pitcher preparation times during a minor league baseball game between the Brooklyn Cyclones and Greensboro Grasshoppers, July 13, 2022, in the Coney Island neighborhood of the Brooklyn borough of New York.

Associated Press

game day in and day out. On-field rules and regulations impact their preparation, performance, and ultimately, the integrity of the game itself," the union said in a statement. "Major League Baseball was unwilling to meaningfully address the areas of concern that players raised."

The pitch clock will be set at 15 seconds with no runners on base and 20 seconds with runners up from the 14/19 tested at Triple-A this season and 14/18 at lower minor league levels.

There will be a limit of two of what MLB calls disengagements: pickoff attempts or steps off the rubber per plate appearance, and a balk would be called for a third or more unless there is an out. The disengagement limit would be reset if a runner advances.

A catcher will be required to be in the catcher's box with nine seconds left on the clock and a hitter in the batter's box and focused on the pitcher with eight seconds remaining. Penalties for violations will

be a ball called against a pitcher and a strike called against a batter.

A batter can ask an umpire for time once per plate appearance, and after that it would be granted only at the umpire's discretion if the request is made while in the batter's box.

The clock has helped reduce the average time of a nine-inning game in the minor leagues from 3 hours, 4 minutes in 2021 to 2:38 this season. The average time of a nine-inning game in the major leagues this

year is 3:06; it was 2:46 in 1989, according to the Elias Sports Bureau. The shift limit requires two infielders to be on either side of second and all infielders to be within the outer boundary of the infield when the pitcher is on the rubber, and infielders may not switch sides unless there is a substitution.

Use of shifts has exploded in the past decade, from 2,357 times on balls hit in play in 2011 to 28,130 in 2016 and 59,063 last year, according to Sports Info Solutions. Shifts are on pace for 68,000 this season.

The size of bases will increase to 18-inch squares from 15, promoting safety first basemen are less likely to get stepped on but also boosting stolen bases and offense with a 4.5-inch decrease in distance between first and second, and second and third.

Committee members include St. Louis CEO Bill DeWitt Jr., San Francisco chairman Greg Johnson, Colorado CEO Dick Monfort, Toronto CEO Mark Shapiro, Seattle chairman John Stanton and Boston chairman Tom Werner, and umpire Bill Miller. Players on the panel include Cardinals pitcher Jack Flaherty, Rays pitcher Tyler Glasnow, Blue Jays infielder/outfielder Whit Merrifield and Giants outfielder Austin Slater, and Cubs infielder Ian Happ also participated as an alternate. □

Evenepoel closes in on Vuelta title, Pedersen gets 3rd win



Denmark's Mads Pedersen celebrates after winning the 19th stage of the Vuelta cycling race, in Talavera Reina, Spain, Friday, Sept. 9, 2022.

Associated Press

TALAVERA DE LA REINA, Spain (AP) — Remco Evenepoel had no trouble protecting his lead of the Spanish Vuelta on the 19th stage on Friday with only one day of competitive racing left.

Evenepoel of Quick-Step Alpha Vinyl maintained his two-minute lead over Enric Mas over the course of the short and hilly ride that finished in a long, flat arrival to the finish line.

Mads Pedersen, the 2019 world champion, beat his fellow sprinters to claim the 138.3-kilometer (85.9-mile)

ride to and from Talavera de la Reina in central Spain. It was the Dane's third win of this race for his Trek-Segafredo team.

Mas' last chance to overtake Evenepoel will be on Saturday's mountainous stage before the largely ceremonial arrival to Madrid on Sunday when tradition mandates that there are no attempts to overtake the leader.

The 20th stage is a 181-kilometer (112-mile) ride from Moralzarzal to Puerto de Navacerrada that includes three category-one climbs

and a summit finish.

Evenepoel has been leading the race since the sixth stage in the longest run at the top for a Belgian at a Grand Tour race since Johan De Muynck won the Giro d'Italia in 1978. That was the last victory for Belgium in a three-week event.

Evenepoel's most dangerous challenger was three-time defending champion Primož Roglič, who had been closing the gap until he crashed earlier this week and had to withdraw from the race. □

On Football: Despite offseason, don't bet against Tom Brady

By ROB MAADDI

AP Pro Football Writer

TAMPA, Fla. (AP) — Tom Brady's 11-day absence from training camp following a 40-day retirement earlier this year has some people doubting the seven-time Super Bowl champion's focus entering his 23rd season in the NFL.

The 45-year-old Brady didn't come back to be mediocre.

After leading the NFL in yards passing and touchdowns last season, Brady returned to chase "unfinished business." His goal is an eighth ring and second in three years with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

"I've always been very confident in our team, from the day that I got here," Brady said Thursday. "That hasn't changed at all. We've still got to go do it. It doesn't matter. You've still got to go out there and execute under pressure, which is when the fans are watching and the TV is turned on. You've got to go out there and do a great job."

The Buccaneers fell short in the playoffs against the eventual Super Bowl champion Rams last season. They lost Rob Gronkowski to retirement — for now — and added wide receivers Julio Jones and Russell Gage. Losing Pro Bowl center Ryan Jensen to a knee injury and Pro Bowl left guard Ali Marpet to retirement is a big obstacle they must overcome. "In our offensive line, you protect the quarterback no

matter who it is," left tackle Donovan Smith said. "When you've got the GOAT back there, you have got to do a little better. So, we're going to go out there ... and do what we're supposed to do. It's just one of those things that we get paid to do. We're out there to protect and have fun."

For Brady, anything less than a boat parade in February isn't a success. He has hoisted the Vince Lombardi trophy every other season since 2016.

FanDuel Sportsbook gives the Buccaneers the second-best odds to win the Super Bowl at +750 behind only the Buffalo Bills, who are +600. Pro Picks has both teams reaching the Super Bowl but takes Brady and the Buccaneers over the Bills. Here are predictions per division:

NFC EAST: No team has repeated in this division since the Philadelphia Eagles won four titles in a row from 2001-04. The Eagles reached the playoffs last season under first-year coach Nick Sirianni and second-year quarterback Jalen Hurts. They revamped the roster, adding wide receiver A.J. Brown to go with a strong offensive line and improved defense. The Eagles will edge the Cowboys. Dallas will earn one of the three wild-card spots.

NFC NORTH: The Green Bay Packers have won 13 games and finished first in three straight seasons under coach Matt LaFleur. They just can't win in the

playoffs. Two-time reigning AP NFL MVP Aaron Rodgers may have something to prove with the departure of All-Pro wide receiver Davante Adams. With Rodgers, the Packers own the North. Rookie coach Kevin O'Connell will help Minnesota's offense improve enough to get a wild-card berth.

NFC SOUTH: Even if the Buccaneers get swept by the Saints for the third straight season, they'll still finish on top. Jameis Winston is back for New Orleans but coach Sean Payton is gone. The Saints will hover around .500.

NFC WEST: The Rams may not come out of the NFC but they're the best in the West. The 49ers will benefit from keeping Jimmy Garoppolo around to back up Trey Lance. Coach Kyle Shanahan may turn to Garoppolo at some point and the Niners will earn one of the wild-card spots. Kyler Murray got paid to win big games but the Cardinals will struggle to get in.

AFC EAST: Josh Allen will be in the mix for MVP and the talented Bills are the team to beat in an improved division. The Dolphins gave Tua Tagovailoa more protection and another playmaker in Tyreek Hill. But Miami will fall short of the playoffs. So will New England, which earned a wild-card berth last year with rookie QB Mac Jones.

AFC NORTH: Three of the last six teams to lose the Super Bowl missed the play-



Tampa Bay Buccaneers quarterback Tom Brady (12) throws against the Indianapolis Colts in the first half of an NFL preseason game in Indianapolis, Saturday, Aug. 27, 2022.

Associated Press

offs the following season. The Bengals gave Joe Burrow help upfront so they won't miss out entirely, but Lamar Jackson will lead Baltimore to the division title while Cincinnati settles for a wild card.

AFC SOUTH: Matt Ryan replaced Carson Wentz in Indianapolis and he'll be the difference-maker, giving the Colts an advantage over Ryan Tannehill and the Titans. Tennessee earned the No. 1 seed last season but didn't win a playoff game. The slide will continue and it will miss the playoffs.

AFC WEST: Russell Wilson's

presence in Denver makes it a four-team race. He won't become the third straight QB to lead his new team to a Super Bowl victory following Brady and Matthew Stafford. But Wilson will help the Broncos end their playoff drought.

The division still runs through Patrick Mahomes and the Chiefs. Until a team knocks off Kansas City, Pro Picks will stick with them. Justin Herbert and the Los Angeles Chargers missed the playoffs last year because of an overtime loss to the Raiders in Week 18. They'll get in this season and Las Vegas won't. □

Thousands of runners rally around U.S. to 'Finish Eliza's Run'



Runners head down the sidewalk past Fountain Square on Georgia Avenue during "Finish Eliza's Run" on Friday, Sept. 9, 2022 in Chattanooga, Tenn.

Associated Press

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — Thousands of people in cities across the U.S. finished Eliza's run Friday morning. The runs were organized as a tribute to Eliza Fletcher, who was forced into a vehicle after a struggle during her pre-dawn run last Friday in Memphis, Tennessee. A suspect was swiftly identified and has been charged with her kidnapping and murder. The killing of the 34-year-old kindergarten teacher

and mother of two shocked people nationwide, and was particularly upsetting to women runners. An obituary described Fletcher as a "born athlete" who enjoyed spending time outside with husband and children. Many female athletes fear working out alone, at night or in secluded places, and while crime statistics show such killings are exceedingly rare, many report being harassed or worse,

even in well-populated areas. In response, groups of runners decided to "Finish Eliza's Run" in the pre-dawn darkness Friday morning, a week after her slaying. Many wore pink tops and purple shorts in her honor. Groups ran in Memphis, Nashville, Chattanooga and many other cities and towns around the country. Hundreds logged their runs on a website dedicated to the event. □

Weekly SPECIALS

 <p>WAS \$4.57 \$3.42 Per KG</p> <p>Tangerine</p>	 <p>\$5.14 Per KG</p> <p>Black Plums</p>	 <p>WAS \$10.85 \$7.99 Per KG</p> <p>Soppi/Boneless Soupmeat Brasil</p>	 <p>WAS \$9.71 \$7.99 Each</p> <p>Fiora Ultra Bath Tissue 12 roll</p>
 <p>WAS \$3.42 \$2.62 Each</p> <p>Melon Cantaloupe</p>	 <p>WAS \$2.17 \$1.71 Per KG</p> <p>Cabbage Green USA</p>	 <p>WAS \$10.27 \$7.42 Per KG</p> <p>Colombian Sausage (Pork)</p>	 <p>WAS \$9.66 \$7.42 Per KG</p> <p>Pork Strips Shoarma</p>
 <p>WAS \$4.17 \$3.42 Each</p> <p>Tampico Juice Assorted 16al</p>	 <p>WAS \$12.57 \$2.85 Each</p> <p>Pineapples</p>	 <p>WAS \$10.28 \$10.28 Each</p> <p>Tropicana Orange Juice NP 128fz</p>	 <p>WAS \$2.56 \$0.57 Each</p> <p>Koffiebroodje Rond</p>
 <p>WAS \$4.85 \$4.17 Each</p> <p>SPAM Classic 340gr</p>	 <p>WAS \$2.97 \$2.57 Each</p> <p>Pillsbury Funfetti Cake mix 15.25oz</p>	<p>DIARY/FROZEN</p>  <p>WAS \$4.17 \$3.02 Each</p> <p>EE Fancy Shred Assorted Cheese Bsz</p>	<p>HBC/CM</p>  <p>WAS \$1.86 \$3.02 Each</p> <p>Axe Shower Gel Black/Black Night 250ml</p>
 <p>WAS \$7.31 \$6.28 Each</p> <p>White Castle Hamburger/Cheeseburgers 6CT</p>	 <p>WAS \$7.31 \$6.28 Each</p> <p>Ruffin it Cat Litter Box Medium</p>	<p>DELI/BAKERY</p>  <p>WAS \$1.23 \$0.97 100 GR</p> <p>Serrano Ham Boneless</p>	 <p>WAS \$1.14 \$0.94 Each</p> <p>Kroketbroodje</p>

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